

BrooklineCAN Steering Committee

Notes

July 15, 2015

Attendance: Peter Ames, Carol Caro, Frank Caro, Ruthann Dobek, Karen Fischer, Susan Krinsky, Michelle LaPointe, Elenore Parker, John Seay, Ruth Seidman, Molly Turlish, Roberta Winitzer

Introduction of new members. Frank will reach out to Lance Chapman and Lisa Berger, who have been elected to the Steering Committee but have not yet attended.

Annual meeting. A save-the-date email has been sent announcing the Annual Meeting for Thursday, September 17 (5-7 p.m. at the Senior Center) after a few missteps. Paper invitations will be mailed in August. Special accomplishments for 2014-15 will be listed in the program.

Brookline Day. The annual event (scheduled for Sunday, September 20, 11-3) attracts primarily families with children, and we have had difficulties attracting people to our table. Its placement and possible give-away items were discussed along with possible collaboration with the health department. The possibility of a bocce demonstration attracted the most interest.

Fall benefit for the Senior Center. Ruthann announced that the October 28 event this year will honor Frank and Carol Caro (the announcement was greeted with applause).

Treasurer's report. John distributed a report listing income, expenses, and the net balance for each of our four fiscal years. For FY15 (just ended), membership donations were higher than in any previous year (\$16,510); expenditures were also higher (\$12,154.41) than any previous year, leaving a balance for the year of \$4,355.59. We now have a total of \$20,751.59 in reserve. John also pointed out that in their first year Sustaining Memberships (three-years) attracted a total of \$4,720 in membership donations, which we do not expect to duplicate in FY16. Discussion of investing some of the reserves in worthy projects and the proper level of reserve led to these conclusions: we should bring ideas for expenditure/investment to the Steering Committee; we should economize but not starve programs and projects; and that we should look at the overall picture again in a year.

Update on STRAITS project. The Senior Transportation Resources, Advice, Information, Training, and Support project (STRAITS) has been awarded federal funding, but we do not yet know when funds will be available or when the Town of Brookline will approve moving ahead with hiring. We expect to know more by the end of the month. Once we have approval, we will proceed with hiring a half-time director (with benefits) who will work with Brookline and Newton on the project. The entities involved in the project are BrooklineCAN, Brookline Multi-Purpose Senior Center, Brookline Council on Aging, and Newton Council on Aging. The Executive Committee includes Frank, Ruthann, the Executive Director of Newton COA, and Shirley Selhub. Activities will include educational programs and a one-on-one advisory service; volunteers will be needed for both.

Professional Service Providers Group (PSPG). On hiatus for the summer.

Repairs & Referrals. On hiatus for lack of volunteers.

Education. The Party of a Century that concluded just as the meeting began was attended by 14 of the 40 residents of Brookline identified as being age 99 and above. All who attended described the event as “remarkable.” The Education Committee is engaged in planning for fall.

Membership. Today, we have 352 active/paid members, nine more than at the time of the June meeting. Current efforts to reach our goal of 400 members for the year include a mailing to 165 former members, individuals and households, whose renewal dates fell in April, 2015, or earlier. Carol Caro is also sending letters to an additional group of about 20 she selected from the larger list. On Monday, we emailed the 139 people in this group who have email addresses in our database with the message “did you miss your renewal date?” and “you will receive a letter in a few days.” Six renewals and an inquiry came immediately following the emails.

Communications. August 12th, Mary Dexter will meet with the committee to discuss publishing the updated directory of residential buildings with elevators. Molly suggested a possible joint meeting with the Membership Committee to explore how such a directory might be used to increase membership.

Livable Community Advocacy Committee. Nineteen residents of senior public housing attended a June 30 hearing at Town Hall with Department of Public Works Commissioner Andrew Pappastergion on pedestrian safety and access. The meeting was a result of the BrooklineCAN Fellowship supported by JC&FS and conducted by ReServist Janet Selcer, who staged the meeting beautifully. We have offered free membership for one year to the BHA residents who attended, into the ongoing work of LCAC. In the fall, Frank will schedule a follow up meeting with DPW to learn about how DPW is responding to the problems that were reported.

A three-year effort to loosen parking restrictions near the Senior Center led to a July 7th meeting of area Town Meeting members and neighbors focused on recommendations from Transportation Administrator Todd Kirrane. Two TMMs from precincts 9 and 11 attended, and the discussion was dominated by neighbors who do not want extended parking in front of their homes. Several Senior Center users from South Brookline made an effective case for extended on-street parking options for those who drive to the Center. Todd Kirrane and Transportation Board Member were strongly supportive of improved parking options both for volunteers and users of the Center. The next step will be a meeting organized by the Transportation Board specifically to obtain neighborhood feedback.

Next meeting: Wednesday, August 19 at 3:00 PM.

Notes prepared by Molly Turkish